DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 207 746 RC 012 920

AUTHOR Cardwell, G. R.
TITLE Adapted Outward Bound Programmes: An Alternative for Corrections.
PUB DATE 30 Sep 76
NOTE 10p.; Paper presented at the Atlantic Provinces Criminology and Corrections Association Conference (Moncton, New Brunswick, September 30, 1976).

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adolescents; *Adventure Education; Alienation; *Behavioral Objectives; Communication (Thought Transfer); Delinquency; *Delinquent Rehabilitation; *Experiential Learning; Foreign Countries; Negative Attitudes; Outdoor Education; Secondary Education; *Self Concept; Youth Programs
IDENTIFIERS Ontario; *Outward Bound; *Project DARE; Survival Skills; Wilderness Education Programs

ABSTRACT

A number of programmes for delinquent youth have been established throughout North America based on the Outward Bound concept: to involve volunteer participants in an outdoor programme which offers challenging and adventuresome tasks in a high-impact environment. Project D.A.R.E. (Development through Adventure, Responsibility and Education) in Ontario is one such programme, based on wilderness living and a person's relationship to the natural environment. The D.A.R.E. schedule is divided into two 28-day phases; 10 students ages 15-17 are selected to work as a team throughout the programme. Graduation is possible within 56 days. Upon successful completion of Phase I (a combined environmental and outdoor education program), an approved high school credit in Environmental Science is granted. Upon successful completion of Phase II (a combined high adventure and experiential education programme), an approved high school credit in Physical and Health Education is granted. The primary goal of the D.A.R.E. programme is to effect behavior modification (improve peer relations, break the failure pattern, develop pride in a better self-image, develop a new sense of purpose). Do's and don'ts for adapted adventure programmes for delinquent youth, and a list of benefits to be gained from them are included. (CM)

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ADAPTED OUTWARD BOUND PROGRAMMES:

AN ALTERNATIVE FOR CORRECTIONS

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BY

G.R. CARDWELL

SUPERINTENDENT, PROJECT D.A.R.E.,
ONTARIO MINISTRY OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

RC 012920

PRESENTED AT THE ATLANTIC PROVINCES CRIMINOLOGY AND CORRECTIONS ASSOSICATION CONFERENCE

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MONCTON, NEW BRUNSWICK, SEPTEMBER 30TH, 1976

WHAT IS OUTWARD BOUND

Outward Bound has been called "the moral equivalent of war". It has also been termed "advanced Boy Scouting". Perhaps a more appropriate definition is "self discovery through adventure" or "education for and through reality".

The Outward Bound programme stresses intense physical activity, an appreciation of our natural resources and the development of certain skills such as canoeing, backpacking, rock climbing, sailing and other seasonal activities.

To-day there are 30 Outward Bound school on five continents: two in Canada, six in United States, six in the United Kingdom, and the others in Europe, Africa, Asia and Australia. All are non-profit, tax-exempt, non-political institutions with each school governed by independent boards of trustees or councils.

THE HISTORY OF OUTWARD BOUND

The origins of Outward Bound may be traced to a German private school called Salem, founded by Prince Max in 1920. Kurt Hahn was the first Headmaster, but was forced to flee Germany during the 1930's, as his views conflicted with those of Adolph Hitler. He found refuge in Scotland where he was instrumental in developing another private school, the famous Gordonstroun. Gordonstroun is located near Elgin, and boasts many famous graduates, amongst whom are numbered Prince Philip and Prince Charles. The school has developed an international reputation with all boys participating in a strenuous outdoor programme. All students must choose one of the following service activities: mountain rescue brigade; sea rescue brigade; or Gordonstroun fire brigade.

During World War II, Kurt Hahn temporarily left Gordonstroun for Aberdovy, Wales. He had been requested in 1940 by the British Admiralty to assist in the training of British seamen. The Admiralty was upset as a great number of their young seamen were dying upon their first exposure to disaster during battle action, while their veteran counterparts were surviving these incidents.

Kurt Hahn decided that "real wartime training" was required to enable British seamen to survive battle conditions. A training centre near Aberdovy was established to instruct British naval recruits in methods of survival. Hahn's methods met with considerable success and the incidence of death by seamen during initial battle action was greatly reduced.

After the war, in 1946, the Outward Bound Trust was established in Aberdovy. During the 1950's and 1960's a number of Outward Bound schools opened, not only in the British Isles, but throughout the world. The establishment of these schools was as a consequence of the demand to offer an outdoor programme which would provide challenge and adventure to the youth of the world. By 1971, there was 24 schools established internationally. The first Outward Bound School in Canada opened at Keremos in British Columbia in June of 1969. The second Outward Bound school in Canada was established this summer on Black Sturgeon Lake near Thunder Bay in north-west Ontario. This school is called the Canadian Outward Bound Wilderness School (COBWS).

Basically, today, Outward Bound attempts to involve volunteer participants in a challenging outdoor programme which offers pre-designed tasks in a high-impact environment. The tasks are designed to be challenging and adventuresome and include extended expeditions, rock climbing and rappelling, solo, white water canoeing, kayaking, ropes course, and other related activities. All of these activities involve individual and group stress; however, the tasks are designed by instructors so that success is possible in all instances, if performed correctly.

ADAPTION OF OUTWARD BOUND PROGRAMME FOR CORRECTIONS

A number of programmes for delinquent youth have been established throughout North America based on the Outward Bound concept. Two of the original and most notable have been Homeward Bound in Massechusetts and Project D.A.R.E. in Ontario. Many other programmes have been established and have met with varying degrees of success. It is my intention at the end of the presentation to outline some of the major problem areas in establishing an adventure programme for delinquent youth.

Basically, the establishment of experiential and adventure programmes for delinquent youth must overcome the following negative character traits:

1. Low self-esteem.
2. Inability to communicate with others.
3. Alienation and resentment toward adults.
4. The inability to delay gratification.

5. The inability to pursue long-range goals.
6. A low threshold of frustration.
7. Impulsiveness.
8. An inability to co-operate to form a mutual trust relationship.

To overcome these character traits, basic outdoor programme components must be emphasized in the establishment of any new programme:

1. A physical and/or mental challenge.
2. A clear and unavoidable task.
3. An occasional confrontation with fear - height, dark, solitude.
4. Continuing involvement in adventure.
5. An overcoming of a seemingly impossible task and/or challenge.
6. Immediate results and relevant consequences.
7. A positive experience.

Adventure programming for delinquent youth is an opportunity to gain self-reliance, to prove one's worth, to define one's manhood or womanhood, with results and tasks clear, definable and unavoidable.

PROJECT D.A.R.E.

Project D.A.R.E. stands for Development through Adventure, Responsibility and Education and was established in 1971 by the Ontario Ministry of Correctional Services as a specialized training school programme. The concept is based on wilderness living and a person's relationship to the natural environment. Project D.A.R.E. was originally opened south of Sudbury, at Portage Lake Camp with the intention of offering a unique experience for the multiple recidivist who had failed in the regular training school system. A second camp was opened in 1972 to serve youths who were involved in the training school system for the first time. By September of this year the two programmes were consolidated at one camp on Loxton Lake south of North Bay, and female students were accepted into the regular D.A.R.E. programme for the first time.

The D.A.R.E. programme is open-ended with graduation possible within 56 days - if earned. The schedule is divided into two 28-day phases; 10 students ages 15 - 17 are selected to work as a team throughout the programme. Each phase programme is different, but both have the common element of outdoor recreation therapy and value forming experiences consistent throughout. Briefly, the programmes are organized as follows:

Phase I - combined environmental and outdoor education program. Topics involved in the outdoor programme include ecology, conservation, bush safety, planning and design of bush construction, trapping skills, edible plants and other aspects of environmental science. Interwoven with these activities are programmes involving camping and survival techniques, backpacking, orienteering, rock climbing, rappelling and other related seasonal activities (snowshoeing, cross-country skiing in winter; canoeing, sailing and kayaking in the summer).

Three trips are usually scheduled for this phase with each trip being 4 - 6 days in length. At the end of the phase, the students participate in the "lone watch" (a mini solo) to help serve as a transition into the more rugged Phase II programme.

One (1) approved high school credit (Environmental Science) is granted for the successful completion of this phase.

Phase II - a combined high adventure and experiential education programme. This phase has been modelled after the "Outward Bound" programme. It includes lengthy hikes and expeditions, group survival, rock climbing, rappelling, mountain rescue, initiative tests, ropes course, marathon, a community weekend, a service day and a solo experience. Through these adventure-laden and challenging activities, it is hoped that students will develop an appreciation of nature and acquire an awreness of themselves as well as their environment. This phase also requires a constant effort by staff to draw parallels between the daily challenges of the natural environment and the urban and domestic challenges of society after graduation from D.A.R.E.

One (1) approved high school credit (Physical and Health Education) is granted for the successful completion of this phase.

The goal of the D.A.R.E. programme is not primarily to teach outdoor skills to the individual student; rather, it is to effect behaviour modification.

We believe the concept of working in teams and attempting to overcome pre-designed challenges to achieve short term goals has the effect of improving a child's peer relations and help to break the failure pattern that he or she has had to cope with for many years. As well, the intimate relations developed between staff and students during trips provide us with a better opportunity to counsel and guide them.

It is our firm belief that the above programme assists students to become aware of their potential and aids them in establishing a desire for achievement. Through the student's participation in D.A.R.E. they are helped to discover their own qualities as well as to develop pride in a better self-image. Thus, it is hoped that all students will develop a new sense of purpose which will benefit them on their return to regular society.

The entrance sign to the camp reads:

DARE . . . to dream
. . . to hope
. . . to feel

DARE . . . to believe
. . . to seek
. . . to find

DARE . . . to be yourself

However, mere words or sayings cannot adequately express Project D.A.R.E. It is even difficult to capture through the medium of the camera. Nonetheless, a slide and sound presentation has been prepared which attempts to catch this spirit. This presentation offers an overview of the camp and then follows the students through various activities of the programme.

S L I D E P R E S E N T A T I O N

(25 minutes)

SUMMARY

The motto of Project D.A.R.E. is "Seek Your Horizon". It is my understanding that some interest has been fostered in the Atlantic provinces for the possible implementation of an adapted adventure programme for delinquent youth. To this end, I wish all involved well in "seeking your horizon". I would also offer some advice borne through five years of programme growth at Project D.A.R.E.:

DO's

1. Demand a high level of competence from instructors in educational background, outdoor skills and child care skills.
2. Structure a relevant aftercare system as part of a continuum of the actual programme.
3. Require the probation and/or aftercare officers to be knowledgeable of the programme. At the very least, officers should experience the intense program themselves. They should also be required to visit the programme during the progression of their students through the course.
4. Choose your direction wisely. Ensure a high level of outdoor skills, good management "track record", progressive experience in outdoor programmes and demonstrated ability to work with delinquent youth.
5. Be careful in equipment selection and supplies.
6. Seek professional advice from the few people in Canada who are experts.
7. Establish good public relations with the community prior to and during the establishment of your programme.
8. Maintain as large a selection of candidates as possible for your programme, i.e. probationers, diversion projects, group home candidates, judge's referrals, training school wards.

DON'T's

1. Attempt to restructure an existing training school institution into a camp.
2. Establish a "Forestry Camp" and call it an adventure programme.
3. Pay programme staff by the hour.
4. Hire existing civil servants who profess interest in an "intense outdoor programme".
5. Hire staff members who believe that an intense outdoor programme would be good for <u>their</u> development.
6. Establish sensational and meaningless objectives.
7. Allow the programme to become an "uncontrollable bandwagon" with a lot of 'hangers-on'.
8. Restrict your base of clientele.

9. Overprogramme by offering everything from riding to ocean sailing.
10. Underplan.
11. View the programme as a "cure-all" for every correctional ill from truancy to psychotic behaviour.

CONCLUSION

We must be careful not to assume that an adventure programme is a panacea for the problems of troubled youth. On the contrary, often initial sensationalism and half-truths have resulted in unrealistic expectations and programme disappointments. However, certain claims may be made regarding the use of these programmes:

1. The alternative environment of nature demands a change in outlook and an adjustment on the part of an individual that can often catalyze further growth and change.

2. Activities which are challenging, exciting, exhilerating and which possess immediate results are readily grasped and understood. They speak deeply to the needs of students to feel competent.

3. A small group structure in the outdoor fosters co-operation and teamwork and helps to build trust in human relations. When staff have been trained in the outdoors and in group therapy the results are many and powerful.

4. There is always high impact, drama and deep experience which have great effect if planned at critical points. It may act as a catalyst in opening one's insights into oneself and to new experiences. The programme must not be seen as an end onto itself, but rather as part of a continuum; it needs to be viewed in the total context of a young person's life.

5. It provides a learning climate that is enhancing to both the students and the staff. It is a programme in which the professional cannot hide behind jargon. The activities help build relationships that are warm, intimate and equal where people may interact with respect, dignity and humanity.

For those of you who may be involved in the implementation and development of adapted "Outward Bound" type programmes for correctional services in the Atlantic Provinces, may I offer you my good wishes for success in this endeavor and the blessing of the D.A.R.E. Camp prayer:

May the trails rise with you.

May the wind be always at your back.
And may the good Lord hold you
in the hollow of his hand.

Now and Forever.